



On the Bayou

DECEMBER 2019



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Message from the Director

Dr. Deepak Bhatnagar

We completed our performance evaluation process for FY19, and all awards forms have been submitted for processing. No sooner had we completed this work, we begun our first quarter reviews for FY20. These need to be completed by the first week of January 2020. I am advising all Supervisors and Staff to carefully read the performance plans, and discuss them in some detail during the review. This will help ensure a smooth process, and we could have no surprises towards the later part of the year. Items listed in IDPs for completion could also be addressed at this time. Do take full advantage of these quarterly reviews to layout expectations, as these reviews can provide opportunities for employees to exceed in various elements.

All this can wait for a few days. Right now is a good time to relax a little and enjoy the time with family and friends, making the most of the holiday season. At SRRRC, we have already started the season by decorating our customary tree; and our holiday party will be held on December 12th. The Employees Advisory Council is working hard to make it a memorable event, as we all get together to celebrate the holidays. Hope we have a good turnout for this fun event.

Best wishes to everyone for an enjoyable and relaxing holiday season, and a very happy, healthy and prosperous new year.

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Events and Observances

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Native American Heritage Month

Submitted by: Matthew Hillyer

Native American Heritage Month was observed at SRRC beginning on November 1st with NAHM posters on the ground floor and in the lobby displaying the official theme: “Indigenizing the future of STEM”.

Our luncheon was held on November 6 when Veterans at SRRC were recognized and honored for their service and received a commemorative bookmark adorned with feathers specially made by NAHM committee members. Dr. Margaret Brown, Director of Clinical Training at The Xavier University of Louisiana Chicago School of Professional Psychology, then presented on the topic of “Creating a Welcoming Environment for Indigenous Colleagues”. She shared personal experiences including those of empowerment and activism. She also distributed seeds for plants traditional to indigenous peoples in the United States. A delicious carrot cake was shared among attendees.

We also had a brown bag lunch film screening of a PBS documentary titled “Medicine Woman” on November 25. Popcorn, homemade baked sweets and hot apple cider were enjoyed while we learned about the history of the first female Native American physician, Susan La Flesche Picotte, and her influence on female Native American medical practitioners today. We also heard about other first Native American women in science and medicine, and how they served their communities by combining their traditional healing practices with medicine to promote health and wellbeing.

Many thanks to the Native American Heritage Month committee members for organizing and implementing two entertaining and informational events, and Matt King, Scott Pelitire and Greg Ford for assisting in making popcorn, and Michael Santiago and Christine Sickler for photography.



SRRC thanks our Veterans for their service



Events and Observances (cont.)

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Combined Federal Campaign Kickoff

Submitted by: Suzi Brashear

Our **CFC Halloween Kickoff** was held on Thursday October 31. Employees took a break from work, had a chance to visit with some local CFC Charity Organizations, learned about the benefits of CFC giving, and joined in the fun!

And some dressed up and entered the **CFC Halloween Costume Contest** to promote the spirit of giving.

Support the causes that are closest to your heart, and if you don't have one, you can learn about new ones. The list of charities has thousands of local, national, and international charities in the campaign. If you are ready to place a pledge, please go to the website:

<https://cfcgiving.opm.gov/welcome> to make a pledge online.

If you need assistance, please contact your Keyworker:

Suzi, CFC Coordinator

Keyworkers:

FFS Darlene Downey

FPSQ Shawndrika Reed

FPSQ Jane McBride

AO/DO Suzanne Martin

CSQ Mia Schexnayder

CFB Dawn Reed

CCU Crista Madison

CU Jamie Howell

CU Scott Pelitire



CFC Kickoff Halloween Costume Contestants

ARS Mycotoxin Research Meeting

ARS Mycotoxin research was reviewed at SRRC on November 19-21. Thirty-five ARS Scientists, three National Program Leaders and one Deputy Administrator attended the review.

In attendance were National Program Leaders:

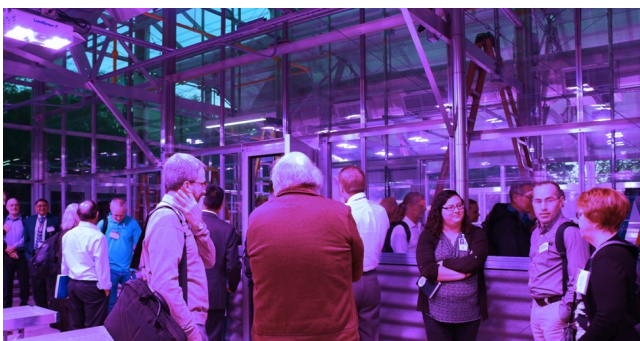
Jim Lindsay and **Kim Cook**, Nutrition, Food Safety and Quality

Tim Widmer, Crop Production and Protection

Pamela Starke-Reed, Deputy Administrator, Nutrition, Food Safety and Quality

Dr. Pam Starke-Reed and Dr. Deepak Bhatnagar welcomed participants to the workshop on Nov. 19. Review sessions followed with participants from New Orleans, Tuscon and Albany presenting their research programs in the morning. Scientists from Stoneville, Starkville, Athens, Peoria, St. Paul and Tifton gave sessions on their programs in the afternoon. A tour of the new greenhouse ended the first day of the workshop.

The second day of the meeting was dedicated to open discussions on *Aspergillus*, *Fusarium*, breeding and other research related issues. The third day concluded the meeting with an open discussion and planning for a Mycotoxin White Paper, followed by a tour of SRRC facilities that included the Vintage Lab, Pilot Plant, and Research Unit labs.



Scientific Presentations and Meetings (cont.)

Visiting Scientist Presentation

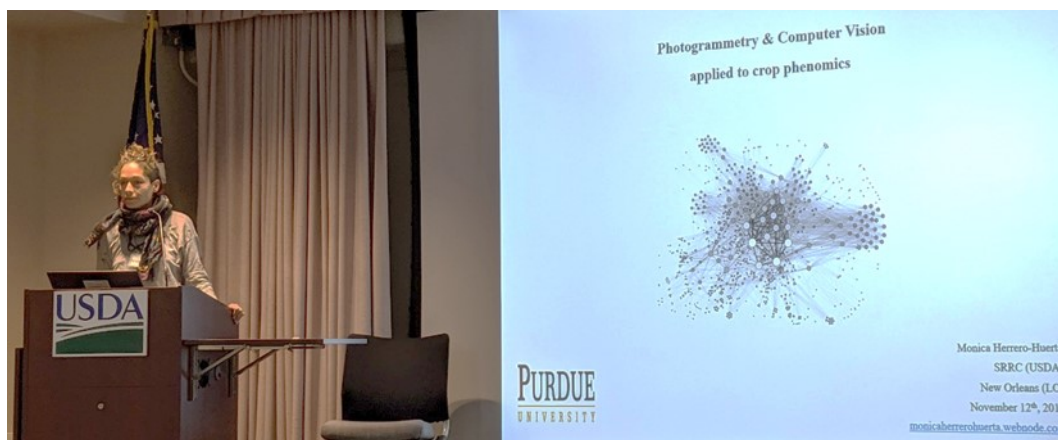
Dr. Monica Herrero Huerta of Purdue University presented a seminar on Tuesday Nov. 12th entitled : 'Biomass modelling of Soybean by Convolutional Neural Networks from UAS-based multi-sensor data fusion'.

Although her topic is rather unusual for SRRC, many staff members attended the talk and asked questions relevant to their work.

Dr. Huerta is currently working on the project: 'Development of Analytical Tools for Drone-based Canopy Phenotyping in Crop Breeding' at the American Institute of Food and Agriculture at Purdue University.

Dr. Huerta earned a PhD in Civil Engineering from the University of Salamanca (Spain, 2016). She is currently a research staff member at Purdue University for the department of Agronomy developing Analytical Tools for Drone-based Canopy Phenotyping in Crop Breeding.

Her research interests are focused primarily on close-range hyperspectral photogrammetry and LiDAR by alternative platforms and specifically in computer vision and machine learning analysis by sensor fusion applied to agro-forestry and plant science. More information on her research can be found at: monicaherrerohuerta.webnode.com.



Scientific Presentations Series will feature Cotton Chemistry Utilization Research Unit

Dr. Vince Edwards will present a summary of his cotton wound healing research, along with a brief introduction to the cotton industry, and issues that CCU is trying to address, on **Friday December 13 at 10:00 a.m. in the Bayou Conference Room**. His work has led to the commercial development of new bandage products.

Dr. Edwards' presentation is titled: "Some A B C's on Design and Preparation of Cotton-Based Dressings for Hemostasis". Come and learn about CCU's work.

Scientific Presentations and Meetings (cont.)

December Scientific Meetings

Submitted by: Terri Von Hoven

Dec 1-3	International Conference on Food, Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture	Cairo, Egypt
Dec 2-3	Food Microbiology and Nutrition	London, England
Dec 2-4	Agricultural Excellence Conference	Fredericton, Canada
Dec 2-6	International Cotton Advisory Committee Plenary Meeting	Brisbane, Australia
Dec 3-4	Women in Food and Agriculture Summit	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Dec 4	International Conference on Agriculture, Forestry, Biotechnology, Food Science	Puri, India
Dec 10	Cotton Board/Cotton Incorporated Joint Meeting	New Orleans, LA
Dec 10-11	International Forum of Agricultural Robotics	Toulouse, France
Dec 13-14	International Conference on Agriculture	Miami, FL

Scientific Recognition

H. N. Cheng is 2020 ACS president-elect

H. N. Cheng, a research chemist with the Commodity Utilization Research Unit has been elected the 2020 American Chemical Society president-elect by members of ACS. Dr. Cheng will serve as president of the society in 2021 and immediate past president in 2022; he will also serve on the board of directors from 2020 through 2022.

With 7,474 votes, H.N. won the president-elect race by a landslide. "I'm very much honored by the trust that ACS members have placed on me,"

H.N. says. "Over the years, I've gained a lot from being involved in the ACS, and I want to give back to the profession."

Dr. Cheng says his presidential goals include strengthening member involvement in ACS, supporting innovation and career programs, advocating for science, and growing the chemistry enterprise. He also wants to continue strengthening ACS's connections around the world.

"I'm very much in favor of global collaboration. I think it benefits our members, and ultimately it benefits the science," Dr. Cheng says.

Congratulations, we are all very proud of H.N. and his accomplishments!



Scientific Recognition (cont.)

Dr. Ruth Benerito inducted into Cotton Incorporated Cotton Research and Promotion Hall of Fame

Dr. Ruth Benerito, a Research Chemist at SRRC for over 30 years, will be inducted into the 2019 Cotton Research and Promotion Program Hall of Fame. The program recognizes individuals that have made significant contributions to the cotton industry.

Dr. Al French, Collaborator and retired SRRC Research Chemist participated in a brief on-camera interview during which he was asked about Ruth Benerito's contribution to the cotton industry. The interview will be included in a short video that will be shown during Dr. Benerito's posthumous induction into the Cotton Incorporated Hall of Fame ceremony in New Orleans in December.



To view the video about Dr. Benerito, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfND7N00Z8I>

SRRC Internet Page

Submitted by: **Brian Mack**

The SRRC's public webpage is managed by employees within the building and can be accessed at: <https://www.ars.usda.gov/southeast-area/new-orleans-la/southern-regional-research-center/>.

Summaries of all SRRC research projects are available under the "Research" dropdown menu as well as abstracts of publications. Each research unit is represented as well with pictures and a description of each project. Phone numbers and email addresses for all staff, organized by research group or unit, is available under the "People" menu. The "About SRRC" menu has links for the last twelve issues of *On the Bayou* as well as a history of research accomplishments at the SRRC that was put together for the 75th anniversary.

Each research unit's page is managed by the following people:

Commodity Utilization Research - Thomas Klasson

Cotton Structure and Quality Research - Terri Von Hoven

Cotton Fiber Bioscience Research - David Fang

Cotton Chemistry and Utilization Research - Elena Graves

Food and Feed Safety Research - Les Scharfenstein

Food Processing and Sensory Quality Research - Barry Hurlburt

SRRC main page - Brian Mack

Check out our Internet page.

Submitted by: Shannon Beltz

Save the Date:

Our SEA Inspection with Shelia Parker and Darrell Williamson will be February 5-6, 2020. We will be starting walk through inspections very soon to help get everyone ready ☺

SRRC JHA Library:

The SRRC JHA (Job Hazard Library) is now available for use. Please follow the Safety link on the Intranet to get to the JHA Info page.

The direct link to the library is here: file:///ARSLANEW3FP0040/JHA_Library

COMING SOON:

We will be working with each lab to install a wall file for your Safety Documentation. This will keep everything in one uniform location from lab to lab.

Results of the SEA FEVS Response Rate Challenge

Submitted by: Deepak Bhatnagar

Congratulations to SRRC staff for meeting the target for FEVS participation, and in turn getting two hours of Administrative leave for all permanent employees.

Thanks to all who took the time to respond. The Management Team will look over the results and act upon items that need to be addressed at the Center.

The 2019 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results are now available on the [Axon FEVS page](#). All employees are encouraged to review the results. This is a great opportunity to engage with leadership and co-workers on ways to improve job satisfaction, accountability and engagement in work units.

Book Exchange

Submitted by: Suhad Wojkowski

For the past several years, our Earth Day activities included a Book Swap (along with the popular Plant Swap). This book exchange is very popular, with many employees bringing books and taking books. Since it is so popular, the Library will have a year round Book Exchange area. These book-cases are not meant to take away from our Earth Day's book swap, only to highlight that reading is fundamental and fun. The expanded book exchange in the Library (Room 1040) is now available. Come to the Library and check it out!



SRRC Recycling News

Submitted by: Isabel Lima and Matt King

SRRC recycling efforts in 2019 are estimated below:

Amount (lbs)	Material type
540	aluminum cans and tin
1,500	plastic
20,000	cardboard/magazines/catalogs/misc. paper
1,000	white ledger paper
1,000	miscellaneous batteries
8,000	Electronics equipment including computers
5,4000	scrap metal
1000	tree trimmings (compost)
960	printer cartridges
88,000	total in Pounds
44	total in Tons

The New Orleans Department of Sanitation offers a Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Drop-Off Day annually is scheduled on the second Saturday in May.

In Orleans Parish, the Drop-Off location is **2829 Elysian Fields Avenue, New Orleans, LA.**

Visit <https://www.nola.gov/sanitation/trash/household-hazardous-waste/> for more information on specific dates and what qualifies as “household hazardous waste” and what should NOT be placed in trash during regular trash pickups.

Below is a list of Common Household Hazardous Wastes (HHW):

Batteries	Paint Thinner and Varnish
Incandescent/Florescent Bulbs	Grout
Pesticides	Oil, Gasoline
Garden Chemicals	Aerosols
Muriatic Acid	E-Waste
Televisions	Household Cleaners
Paint (latex and oil-based)	Flammable Liquids
Paint Thinner and Varnish	Pool Shock



Submitted by: Janell Becker

Please welcome one new employee to SRRC:

Kathleen Nguyen is a Student Intern working in the Cotton Chemistry and Utilization Research Unit with Dr. Vince Edwards.



EBC Collects Toys for Forgotten Angels Christmas Party

Submitted by: Jane McBride

Employee Benefit Club sponsored a toy drive for the Ozanam Inn Annual Forgotten Angels Christmas Party. The party is a celebration for homeless children to enjoy. EBC collected new, unwrapped toys for the event. Thank you to all who contributed.



SRRC blood drive

Submitted by: Matt King

Employees participated in the blood drive on Monday, December 2. Over 25 donors participated and all donors received a free T-Shirt, and were entered in a drawing for winning 2 Plaza level Saints home game tickets. Donations will be especially helpful for local children in hospitals over the Holiday Season.



Holiday Tree Trimming

Submitted by: Scott Pelitire

Our Annual Tree Trimming was held in the lobby on Wednesday, December 4 to jumpstart the holiday season. Staff came together for hot chocolate, coffee, cider, and treats while we decorated the tree and listened to some festive music.



Save the Date:
SRRC Holiday Party
Thursday December 12 at noon
Bayou Conference Room



New Orleans Area Events

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Submitted by: Terri von Hoven

Celebration in the Oaks	City Park, NOLA	Nov 29-Jan 1
Audubon Zoo Lights	Audubon Zoo, NOLA	Nov 29-Dec 30
Festival of Trees	LA Children's Museum, NOLA	Nov 30-Dec 29
Holiday Shopping on Magazine St	Magazine St, NOLA	Nov 29-Dec 25
Pythian Market Trivia Mondays	Pythian Market, NOLA	Dec 2,9,16,23,30
Teddy Bear Tea	Roosevelt Hotel, NOLA	Dec 7-14
Brunch with Santa	Bourbon Orleans, NOLA	Dec 8-22
Polar Express Train Ride	NO Union Passenger Terminal	Dec 9-Jan 1
LUNA Fete	Lafayette Square, NOLA	Dec 12-15
Latkes with a Twist	Press St Station, NOLA	Dec 12
Cajun Holiday Tea with Papa Noel	Paddlewheeler Creole Queen	Dec 14-15
Garden District Holiday Home Tour	Garden District, NOLA	Dec 14-15
Holiday Spectacular with 610 Stompers	Mahalia Jackson Theater	Dec 14
Jingle on the Boulevard	NO East	Dec 14
Baroque Christmas	Orpheum Theater	Dec 19
NOLA Christmas Fest	Morial Convention Center	Dec 20-31
Sunbelt vs Conference USA	Superdome, NOLA	Dec 21
Caroling in Jackson Square	Jackson Square, NOLA	Dec 22
French Quarter Holiday Home Tour	French Quarter	Dec 22
Christmas Eve Bonfires	Levee, Gramercy, LA	Dec 24
Natchitoches Christmas Festival	Natchitoches, Louisiana	Nov23-Jan 6

Recent SRRC Publications

Submitted by: Suhad Wojkowski

Full text pdfs of SRRC publications are available in the Eprints database via “Library” link on the SRRC Intranet page: <http://nola.srrc.usda.gov:8000/srrcmenf.htm>

Click on the article's title below to launch the pdf from Eprints.

Cheng, H.N., Gross, Richard A., and Smith Patrick B., eds. Green Polymer Chemistry: New Products, Process, and Applications. ACS Symposium Series 1310. Washington DC: American Chemical Society, 2018. 435pp.

Kim, Hee Jin and Thyssen, Gregory and Song, Xianliang and Delhom, Christopher D. and Liu, Yongliang (2019) [*Functional Divergence of Cellulose Synthase Orthologs in Between Wild Gossypium raimondii and Domesticated G. arboreum Diploid Cotton Species.*](#) Cellulose, 26. pp. 9483-9501.

Satterlee, Timothy and Entwistle, Sarah and Yin, Y. and Cary, Jeffrey W. and Lebar, Matthew and Losada, Liliana and Calvo, A.M. (2019) [*rmtA-Dependent Transcriptome and Its Role in Secondary Metabolism, Environmental Stress, and Virulence in Aspergillus flavus.*](#) G3: Genes, Genomes, Genetics pp. 4087-4096.

Wang, Yimin and Tang, Dou-dou and Yuan, Xu-yin and Uchimiya, Minori and Li, Ji-zhou and Li, Zhen-yu and Luo, Zi-cheng and Xu, Ze-wen and Sun, Shi-ge (2020) [*Effect of Amendments on Soil Cd Sorption and Trophic Transfer of Cd and Mineral Nutrition Along the Food Chain.*](#) Ecotoxicology and Environmental Safety, 189 (110045). pp. 1-9.